



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

of building a \$75,000 library. They had at first requested the librarian to look up the matter thoroughly and lay out a plan concerning the inside of the library, what was wanted on the inside without any reference to the outside. A local architect was chosen, in order to have him always on the ground. Three members of the board went with the architect and visited a number of libraries, picking out the good points and finding out the bad ones. Then the librarian and the architect met and together they put an outside to the library. Their library is built almost without any permanent partitions and offers a light, cheery and pleasant inside.

Mr Dawley stated his approval, as far as possible, to open shelves. In their library no great amount of books had been lost and but very little mutilation of books had occurred. With regard to the newspaper room, he stated that in their case it had been used in making the library popular and was a great success. They had the leading newspapers from all over the country and he could see no valid argument against a library having a newspaper room.

Mr Carr of Scranton, Pa., stated that these problems had to be looked at differently. Open shelves was a very important question, and while some libraries could afford to carry them on, others could not. As to architects, in general, they do not deal with any line of work so unsatisfac-

torily as they do with libraries. Few libraries are what they should be and it is a very serious matter. Librarians should plan from the inside out, not from the outside in. Newspaper rooms also depend on the locality.

Mr Ranck from Grand Rapids, Mich., spoke a good word for newspaper rooms. They are used by traveling men, who often come to the library to use the papers from their own towns. Newspapers can be used, and are being used, in a reference way in a good many of our libraries. Business and professional men who are looking for the sort of thing they can only find in the newspapers come to the library and refer to them. In this way they serve a good, useful purpose.

Mr Porter gave a brief outline of the open shelves experience of the Cincinnati public library. Everything, with the exception of the art room, was open to the public. The main building and the branch libraries follow this plan. Some books, it is true, are missed, and this is especially true when a branch library is first opened. But few books are lost in proportion to the good obtained through open shelves. The plan of building libraries in Cincinnati is similar to that followed by Mr Dawley.

After rather an interesting discussion of fiction in the library, the election of officers took place, resulting as follows: President, W. T. Porter, Cincinnati; secretary, Thos. L. Montgomery, Harrisburg, Pa.

## CATALOG SECTION

### Large Library session

Friday, June 26, 1908, 9.30 A. M.

Miss VAN VALKENBURGH (Chairman): In working with the list of subject headings some of the library people became aware that the relations between reference librarians and catalogers were not as close as seemed desirable. In fact we found out that there were places where

the reference librarians did not entirely approve of our methods. So it seemed to us desirable that we should have a meeting where we could get the reference librarians and the catalogers together and talk things over and see if we could not come to a little better accord; at any rate, explain our difficulties, if there were any difficulties, and see what seemed to be the conditions existing. We have been very

fortunate in being able to get Mr Keogh, the reference librarian of Yale university, to speak to us on

free him for more intensive or more personal service.

The reference desk is like the bureau of information at a railway station. The traveler does not, as a rule, consult the railway guide for himself; he lacks time, or skill, or both. He prefers to ask the reference clerk, who not only answers his specific question, but often gives additional information of value. For the hourly movements of trains, and for other details of a route, the railway clerk requires a time-table of his road; so the reference librarian requires a catalog of his library, for the details of each subject, and for the quick finding of any particular book. It was said by Carlyle that the worst catalog that was ever drawn up is better than no catalog at all. Even a good catalog, however, is but a means to an end, and is of little importance in itself. It stands in the same relation to a library as an index stands to a book. Its usefulness, like that of a time-table or a book-index, is in proportion to its simplicity and its completeness.

It is the business of the reference librarian to give trained, interested, and effectual help to readers. However adequate his own resources, he must constantly depend upon other departments of the library for the proper provision, arrangement, and record of material. For successful work he needs a suitable collection of books, convenient of access, carefully classified, and exhaustively cataloged. With the provision of books the cataloger has little to do; convenience of access to them is often beyond his control; for the critical classification of the books, and for the thoroughness of his records, the cataloger is chiefly responsible. The reference librarian's use of the classification and of the catalog is the most searching part of their efficiency. Moreover, his judgment is that of the public, whose eyes and hands he is.

The first and greatest duty of the cataloger is to classify his books. For minute classification there is no substitute. The reference librarian, like the public, prefers an examination of the shelves to an examination of any catalog. The classification should be critical, not mechanical; the result of careful judgment and selection, and not the outcome of the centimeter rule and the chances of the alphabet. The classification should, for instance, have a strict regard for the relative value of books. The assistance of the expert is fruitless if the book he recommends is shelved with superseded books without emphasizing its distinction. Every large library should have a select collection of the best books in every subject, a collection constantly added to, constantly weeded, and accessible without formality. Such a collection would relieve the reference librarian from many questions as to the "best book," and would

The catalog should be simple. It is designed to answer certain questions, and the best catalog answers these questions with the least trouble to the user. It should be a labor-saving and not a trouble-making device. It should reveal and not repel. Theoretical considerations should therefore always give way to facility of use. The headings and references should be as consistent as common sense will allow. Minute classification may require a complex notation, but special effort should be made to keep the notation as short and as plain as possible. Readers should be provided with a printed guide to the catalog, outlining its plan, and giving examples from different fields. When the cataloger has done his best, the reference librarian will still have to placate perplexed and disappointed users of the catalog.

The catalog should be complete as well as simple. It should give different methods of approach to the books, and should therefore be in as many different forms

as possible. An author catalog is a prime necessity as an index to the classified shelves. A classified catalog is incomplete without an alphabetical subject-index. A dictionary catalog requires its complement, a classified shelflist open to the public as freely as the dictionary catalog itself. With printed cards such complementary catalogs can be made easily and cheaply. Reading lists of the books in the select collection, and of other works of importance, should be printed or otherwise duplicated, and should have concise, lucid, descriptive annotations. Besides being complete in its methods of approach, the catalog should be a complete index to the contents of the library. Mr Vinton once said that our great libraries are the cemeteries of learning, the cities of buried knowledge. It is for the cataloger to make the dry bones live, to uncover the buried highways and byways. The ideal catalog would give under each head a complete list of what the library had on that subject, without regard to the method of publication. It would list not only separate monographs, but also essays, articles in magazines, and similar hidden material. While analytical work is beyond the means of any library, and beyond the ability of any single cataloger, it is not beyond the means of libraries as a whole and of the cataloging profession. Much cooperative work has been done in this field, but more remains. Every cataloger should feel it a duty to take an active part in cooperative efforts; at least he should see that all such efforts are encouraged, and that all published work of this nature is purchased. He should consider indexes like Poole and the Cumulative, and catalogs like the Peabody and the Boston athenæum, to be parts of his own catalog, and he should give them an equally prominent place. He should bring the bibliographies and the reading lists of other libraries out of the catalog room, and after adding the call-marks of his own library, shelve them for daily public reference. The catalog should, finally, be complete to date. All cataloging should of course

be done as promptly as possible, but special effort should be made to list the most recent accessions.

In all this cataloging work the reference librarian can be of the greatest help. In the classification of books, in the choice of books for the select library, in the compilation or annotation of reading lists, he can use his own store of knowledge or draw upon that of experts as he meets them in his daily work. His knowledge of the ways of readers specially fits him for the suggestion or choice of new subject headings and for the revision of old ones. It is of vital importance to the success of the library that the reference librarian and the cataloger should work in harmony. This harmony is attained by appointing department heads with an eye to human qualities as well as to technical fitness; by encouraging staff meetings with opportunities for informal discussion; by making the work of these officers and their assistants interchangeable by a system of substitution; by giving to assistants of special knowledge complete charge of certain departments, for both reference and cataloging purposes, instead of dividing the work by technical detail. By these and similar means each would understand the other's needs and point of view, and the resulting sense of mutual obligation would develop a unison of movement that would benefit the whole library.

Mr CARL B. RODEN then read a paper entitled

#### THOUGHTS ON REFERENCE LIBRARIANS, BY A CATALOGER

Of all the branches of library administration the two which should be most closely bound together are, unquestionably, the catalogers and the reference librarian, and under the latter term I mean to include all those whose duty it is to bring together the reader and the book, whether this happens to be in the reference department or in the delivery room. Whenever this perfect union does not exist, the reason, it seems to me, must first of all be

sought in the dissimilarity of method in these coordinate arms of the service; never, surely, in a fundamental difference of purpose. By which I mean this: Here, on the one hand, generally below stairs, away from the public and invested with that holy calm which alone is conducive to good cataloging, sits the cataloger—a-cataloging. His only purpose and function is to make easier and clearer the path between the reader and the book. If it were conceivable that the books themselves might be arranged on the shelves in such a way that they could be found in three or more places at once, i. e., under author, title and subjects, that very moment would see the end of the cataloger. But hitherto that has not been considered feasible and so the cataloger is called upon to supply the key which shall unlock the barrier, and this he proceeds to do in a very crude and human way by preparing a library tool called a catalog, a device which both from the patron's and the librarian's standpoint, divergent though they be, grows more formidable in direct ratio to its physical magnitude. There are various forms of this implement, but the champions of each unite upon the one vital purpose of the catalog, namely, that of facilitating the contact of the seeker with that which he seeks in the resources of the library. Now, I suppose it will be conceded, as an elementary proposition, that the most obvious way to make a catalog of a collection of books, whether that catalog be on cards, in book form or on an endless sheet, would be to reproduce, as compactly as possible, but very faithfully, the title-page of each book, omitting nothing, changing nothing, adding nothing except possibly some little extraneous matter designed to convey an idea of the book's physical proportions and properties,—what we term, in the shop-talk of the craft, the collation. In other words, next to examining the book itself, a photographically exact reproduction of the title-page, with collation added, would be the most satisfactory expedient for the reader, and would also be the simplest way of catalog-

ing. Some of us are getting down to that (or up to that) with our minutely accurate and full entries and our painfully wrought out notes, and it occurs to me that the photographic art may yet be employed with advantage in cataloging. If, as has been calculated, it costs 35c to catalog a book, it might even be resorted to as a measure of economy; certainly it would solve most beautifully the serious problem of manifolding entries. But this is by the way. Meanwhile cataloging practice hovers somewhere between the bald, bare, cold-blooded short-title entry, and the full, unabridged copy of titles faithfully reproducing the author's own characterization of his work on his title-page.

Now the point I wish to make is this: Out of the necessity of putting something else in the place of the book—between the book and the reader—something which is subject to certain very definite limitations, as to space and cost, for example; out of the need of choosing what may and what may not be essential in the preparation of this makeshift (and the finest catalog in the world will always remain a makeshift); out of the problem of attempting to forecast under what caption a given book may be expected to be found, out of the multitude of problems which rise up around the cataloger in his daily work, has grown a set of practices, crystallized into rules, which the cataloger finds absolutely indispensable to the prosecution of his task, and for which he cherishes a degree of respect sometimes amounting to reverence and not infrequently—especially in his youth—congealing into idolatry.

Now I, for one, am perfectly willing to concede that these rules, indispensable as they are as a guiding string in a labyrinth, are wholly arbitrary and crudely human and man-made: that they are based upon no proven principle in nature, and that they have not even the sanction of common usage running back to times immemorial, such as, to cite an august example, lies at the base of the great body of the English common law. Just how frail and mortal they are is aptly shown in the amount of

haggling that was required before the new A. L. A. rules were finally brought to the printing stage, and by the long and diplomatic negotiations necessary before our British colleagues would agree to even a portion of the practices which we hold sacred. I am firmly convinced that there is a psychology of cataloging, certain principles which govern the actions of men in their manipulations of things arranged in sequence or series. Some day these principles may be discovered. Perhaps Prof Munsterberg or some of his able colleagues might be tempted to turn their thoughts hither for a little while. But at present they are still undiscovered, and meanwhile all this is by way of saying that the cataloger, having to deal with a vast number of more or less correlated units which it is his duty to coordinate, arrange and render compact in order to promote accessibility to them, has formulated a body of rules of practice, deduced *a priori*, from probability as he has learned it from experience.

Now the reference librarian, having no such problems to deal with has made no rules for himself. Like the busy bee that he is, he flits from flower to flower, gathering his store where he may, and never stopping to consider the "how" and the "why!" Indeed, I should say that it might be dangerous even for the reference librarian to try to do his work by rule;—like the physician who has one favorite prescription which he applies to all ills, or the lawyer who would plead "trespass on the case" to every grievance. When he does work in a groove of this sort he greatly stirs the indignation of the cataloger, as I hope to show a little farther on. But, having no rules, and being such a care-free sprite, what does he, and what should he do?

What he does do is—chafe at all rules. When he comes in contact with the cataloger's rules, instead of recognizing his brother's dire necessities, he carps and jibes at him. When he exclaims against the place of entry of a particular book in the catalog and is told that under the rules it must be so, he scoffs at the rules,

forgetting that it is only by holding fast to these that his colleague keeps the avalanche of books from burying him while he is patiently tunneling a pathway through them.

What he should do is, to become absolutely and thoroughly familiar with the cataloger's rules, and, what is equally important, with the cataloger's practice. I am no stickler for uniformity, nor for the constant, unwavering adherence to rules; I believe that a great amount of time is wasted in attempting to maintain these distinctions, with little material advantage. But if there is anyone who should stand up for, and bow down to, and reverence cataloging rules, it surely is none other than the reference librarian, the constant user of the catalog and of all parts of it, who is called upon to look for a multitude of things—names, titles, subjects, scattered over a large expanse of card trays, yet all amenable to, and coordinated by the same rules. The casual user, the "public," is far less concerned in the inviolable maintenance of the system. The man who comes today to look for George Eliot and finds her under Cross cares not a straw if, a month hence, he should look for Clemens only to be referred to Twain.

It is the reference librarian, then, who, of all persons, should make it his business to come into closest touch with the cataloger. Being the interpreter of the catalog, the "exponent of the index," he should take heed that he knows thoroughly the principles employed in the production of that formidable and treacherous thing which he must subdue to his uses, and when he does not do this; when he ignores it, for example, with the sweeping statement that it can't be depended upon anyway—when all the while he knows not how to use it—when he loses patience because a human contrivance proves to be not infallible, when he falls into the groove I have mentioned and begins to do his work sitting down, administering to every want the same prescription: three parts encyclopedia, three parts almanac and

four parts Poole; when he expects too much of the catalog, and, failing to realize his expectations, depends upon it, henceforth, too little, then the reference librarian not only irritates the cataloger, but he does a positive injustice to the library he assumes to serve. Nothing is more exasperating to the enterprising cataloger than to spend time and thought on the creation of new subjects and to be careful that topics of absorbing current interest are adequately and even exhaustively brought out, only to find that seekers after just that information have been fed, as of old, out of that inexhaustible pitcher of skim milk, the periodical index. And nothing is more unfair to the library which buys the books and keeps abreast of the times in all its departments, than to have questions on all sorts of topics still answered from the old fogies, the callnumbers of which the reference librarian carries in his head. That maxim of George Ade's: "Give the people what they think they want," seems to be writ large in our friends' commonplace book. We have all heard how dangerous a thing a little knowledge is, but all of us who are in libraries have learned how far the skilful display of a little knowledge will go and how easy it is to convince the public that what we are giving them is "what they think they want." The reference librarian can make or break the reputation of his library. He can (to mix metaphors) throw dust in the eyes of the average reader by feeding him the husks out of the hackneyed sources he keeps within reach of his hand, or he can inculcate a genuine respect for the library and its resources by supplying him with the true corn, the latest, the freshest as well as the best, like the lawyer and the honest man in the epitaph, however, not always one and the same. But this latter he accomplishes only by doing two things: First by keeping constantly and closely in touch with the cataloging department, seeking to attain its point of view, since it is the fruits of its labors that form the material for his—and he can perpetrate no greater

flattery upon the cataloger than by exploiting the catalog to the utmost of its capacity. Secondly, I invite the reference librarians occasionally to pay us catalogers a visit in our own quarters. True, we may be secluded and sequestered. But we are not, as you are sometimes prone to assume, like the hermits of old, cut off from all worldly knowledge. It is with us that the new books make their entrance into the library. It is we who have to open them, examine them, read them, all too often, in order to catalog them, until we literally know more about more of them than you who are the purveyors of them. We, again, determine the captions under which they are to be inserted in the catalog which you are charged with interpreting and vitalizing. Can you, indeed, now that you think of it, altogether blame us if we sometimes harbor the secret thought that, after all, the best reference librarian is he who is also, or was once, a cataloger?

Mr W. W. BISHOP: The concluding portion of Mr Roden's remarks exactly fits the case. I do not believe that any reference work that I have done, and I have been doing it for a number of years past, although not always technically under the title of reference librarian, would have ever been half so well done had I not been obliged from my entrance into library work to do cataloging. My experience as head of the catalog department, I think, was the only thing that fitted me to be a reference librarian. We might for a minute stop to consider the history of this peculiar term "reference librarian". We have had catalogers ever since we have had libraries, and we have also had people to explain something of the books to the patrons of the library, but of late years there has come this peculiar misnomer, a reference librarian. I don't know what it means. Nobody knows exactly what the office implies. The reference librarian, in practice, is a sort of buffer between the people who come to the library and the machinery they meet there or perhaps, if you may use another metaphor, he is a lubricant that

makes a thing go smoothly and he generally gets ground up in the process as most lubricants do. It is not always an easy job being between the cog wheels of the library machinery. I fear that I cannot do anything more than to add my most cordial approval to the principle enunciated by both speakers that it is vital to the success both of cataloging and of reference work that not only the heads but the assistants in these two departments should be on more than ordinarily good terms. If I may be permitted a personal experience, the one thing that I felt gave me assurance in cataloging at Princeton was the fact that Mr Collins, the reference librarian, would come up to the catalog department, would—to use common parlance—sass us if we didn't do things as he wanted us to, would tell us where we had made blunders in subject headings according to his point of view, would indicate to us gaps in the collection, and in general occupied the office which in medicine is known as *correctum* (*corrector*). Now he helped us a great deal. He showed us how our work was taken not only by himself—he was familiar with the catalog rules, he also had been a cataloger—but by the people who used the catalogs. He knew all the changes that were made because we kept him informed; he knew whenever we adopted a new rule. We had never thought of adopting a new plan in subject work—I will not say heading; we never thought of adopting a new plan in subject heading work without having first discussed it with him; we took no steps without his knowledge which were changes in matters of form or changes in principle to be followed. That brought about, I think, the most delightful harmony. At all events it made possible the work of a very imperfect machine, for every great catalog is an imperfect machine to a pretty good extent. I want to say also a word as to what Mr Roden has remarked about the tendency of reference librarians to ignore the catalog. Now there are very good reasons for that; I think you are all familiar with them; you know them per-

fectly well. The inherent difficulty in a great card catalog of turning over cards as opposed to the rapidity and ease of consulting a printed page is one to which we have given altogether too little attention in planning our work. I am not going to discuss the inherent difficulties of card catalog. I am not going to apologize for the facility with which we turn to "Whittaker's almanac," "Statesman's year book," "Poole's index," the "Reader's guide to current literature" and so on. Those things are because we have to occasionally. We are obliged to move along the lines of least resistance. We have to do our reference work in very short time, particularly when we take it at the end of a telephone wire. If senator so-and-so calls up to the Library of Congress and wants some information and wants it right back when he is holding the telephone—which not infrequently happens—I make for the nearest almanac or the nearest statistical information; I don't have time to go way over to the card catalog and hunt out and find out, turn over a half-a-dozen titles, send up and get the book and get it down, for by that time there is nobody at the other end of the wire. I think we may be excused for an occasional neglect. This neglect, however, should not be intentional on our part. I endorse every word of what Mr Roden has said as to the occasional failure of the reference librarian to bring out the full content of the library's resources on other subjects by ignoring the excellent analytical and other work which the card catalog contains. It seems to me that these two departments of all others must work in harmony and must have that hand-to-hand and heart-to-heart freedom in criticising which true friends do not hesitate to exercise.

Mr WILLARD AUSTEN (Ithaca, N. Y.): Madam Chairman, I just want to say in connection with Mr Roden's paper—to which I listened with so much interest because I thoroughly agree with him—that the two persons about any library that have to spar back and forth and that have to keep the library up to the high-water

mark of excellence, are the reference librarian and the cataloger. To one point which he brought out I wanted to say amen, and that is, that it is not necessary to be always consistent. I think one of the difficulties that reference librarians have with the catalogers, if the catalogers want to be consistent always, is on that very point. They often will acknowledge that there is a better way of doing the thing but they haven't been doing that way up to that time and, therefore, they do not want to make the change. To me it seems the best thing, when you find a better way, to begin to do it right off, no matter if you cannot go and remodel your whole catalog. I am not speaking now about unessential details but I am speaking about general principles that are found to be faulty in the use of the catalog. The reference librarian, as all of you know who undertake to do that work, is thrown perhaps on his resources more than any other person about the library. He cannot work by rule. He must work in accordance with the case in hand and, therefore, he must use everything he can command at a moment's notice. Therefore it is not only the catalog but all the other records of the library. I am not going to anticipate one of the papers that is to come before you tonight, but merely emphasize in advance that the other records of the library are just as essential—perhaps not just as essential because we do not use them as often—but the other records of the library are things that the reference librarian should also give regard to. There are many things being done in accession records and shelf records and in the other divisions of the library that worry and delay the work of the librarian, though not to so large an extent as does the catalog. And I rejoice more than anything else that we are getting to the point when we realize that the reference librarian is in a position to know the weaknesses of the various library records and that the other departments of the library are calling the reference library into consultation on all of those difficult questions.

Miss McLONEY (Des Moines, Ia.): There would seem to be no room for difference of opinion as to the necessity of the harmonious working of a reference department and the catalog department, and it certainly is true that as the catalog department is strengthened the reference work is strengthened, and there is the greatest necessity that these two departments should work together and should realize the importance of the relationship between them. I am thoroughly in accord with one point that Mr Bishop spoke of, that suggests the thought that there should always be in reference work a distinction made between real research work which it is desired should be exhaustive and the work that is simply to serve not necessarily a temporary purpose but that must be done, as he says, at the end of the telephone wire. Of course then it is perfectly legitimate and indeed essential in many cases to refer to the encyclopedia or to the nearest source of information, but it does not follow that that sort of reference work is in the best sense reference work, and the reference librarian must of course be able to levy upon the resources of the whole library and for that reason the better the catalog the better will be in many respects the reference work, although the reference librarian must know how to use other material not found in the catalog. It certainly is true that the reference librarian can, as one of the papers suggested, make or break the reputation of the library. And the catalogers, I suspect, sometimes feel that they do not get their full share of credit and full share of public attention and possibly not official attention and respect from those who are directly looking after the library. And so I think it is important that this discussion will emphasize the essential relation between these two departments.

Mr J. C. M. HANSON (Washington, D. C.): There are one or two points in Mr Roden's paper that I should like to emphasize, and I shall have to ask pardon if my remarks tend to favor the cataloger on

that account. Last summer I had occasion to visit some of the chief libraries of Europe and I noticed there that it was rather common to have the reference librarian serve one year in the reading room and then the next year switch over to the catalog division and then have the cataloger serve a year in the reading room—sort of rotation in office. Now there is much to be said in favor of such an arrangement. I hardly think it is fair that the cataloger, who, we understand, is constantly preparing these pitfalls into which the public, the dear public, are falling, should not be given an opportunity to study at close range these pitfalls, in order that some means might be found whereby they could be smoothed over or avoided. Then again I think it is perfectly proper that the cataloger, if there is anything of value about the catalog, anything that gives assistance to the public, the cataloger should be given an opportunity to get some of the credit for that. And how is the cataloger to get the credit unless he is brought into contact with the person benefitted, the public? I also know that at times the reference work has suffered woefully because the assistant has lacked even the most rudimentary knowledge of cataloging and cataloging records. I think in that case a year's service in the catalog division would be entirely in place. What I am trying to bring out is this: while I do not think it is fair that the cataloger should always be an anonymous somebody or something way back of the scene somewhere, sort of a scapegoat for everything that goes wrong in the cataloging and the search for books—it is very common, at times, to blame the cataloger whenever a book is not found either because it does not exist or because it has been surreptitiously removed or carelessly removed. Now if the person in charge of the reference work has actually served in cataloging, has that intimate knowledge of cataloging and cataloging records—and I mean by intimate knowledge of cataloging and cataloging records of course not only

the catalogs but the records compiled in connection with the classification, if he or she has that intimate knowledge there will always be more tolerance shown towards the imperfections and shortcomings and limitations that are inseparable from any cataloger. I remember Mr Whitney, of the Boston public library, once saying that in every library there will be more or less dust no matter how cleanly it is kept. In the same way there will be in every catalog a certain amount of dust. And by "dust" he referred to these limitations and shortcomings of which I have spoken and which are inseparable from any catalog. You cannot expect the public to be tolerant towards any limitations of the cataloger but the reference librarian certainly should be. Now I rather think that in our large libraries, especially in our large libraries, it would be a great advantage if some arrangement could be provided by which there would be a closer connection with certain lines of work along different subjects, different classes or sections. I believe that a combination of the cataloging and of the classification and of reference work and of recommendation of books, along certain lines, in certain classes, would give better results in the end and certainly provide a fairer arrangement to all concerned.

Miss M. W. FREEMAN (Louisville, Ky.): As one of the "care-free sprites" to whom Mr Roden referred, who attempt to interpret the card catalog to the public, I was very much interested in his human point of view in regard to the card catalog and to the relations which should exist between the cataloger and the reference librarian. I sometimes fear that in our large libraries the chief difficulty lies in the too rigid lines which are drawn between the different departments. Perhaps we are apt sometimes to overlook the fact that one object of our work is to serve the public as quickly, expeditiously and successfully as possible and that to that point we ought all to cooperate. If we could get together frequently for informal discussions for various points—Miss Mann was telling

me of the way they do that in the Pittsburgh library—of informal discussion between the heads of the circulating department, of the reference department and the catalog department in regard to the classification of books, in regard to subject headings, and so on, and it need not be a formal matter, but it would solve very many of our problems of division and separation and lack of understanding. In regard to the classification, for instance, I think the cataloger as a rule would wish to classify Poole sets carefully in the various departments to which the magazines in question refer. The reference librarian, on the other hand, judging from my own experience, likes to have Poole sets in alphabetic arrangement, not only for her own convenience in using them with the indexes, but for the convenience of her public. We try to train the high school students to use the bound magazines for themselves and if we can have them in alphabetic arrangement they can very much more easily learn to use them. That would be one of the points of simplification which comes about where there is consultation between the cataloger and the reference librarian. Then in the matter of subject headings it is sometimes wise in the public library at least where the reference librarian has the opportunity to study the psychology of the public mind while the cataloger is studying the psychology of the catalog, and combining those two things we find that the psychology of the public mind requires great simplicity of the catalog, and it seems to me sometimes that we could use simpler subject headings than those suggested by the Library of Congress. I was much interested in the method which Miss Guthrie, who does such magnificent work for us in editing the "Reader's guide to periodical literature," has used in selecting of the subject headings. She goes about the office and asks the different members of the staff under what heading they would look if they were looking for a magazine article on a certain subject or if they were looking for a certain magazine

article and had to find it by heading, under what subject they would be likely to look, and she gets the consensus of opinion from the various members of the staff and then uses her own judgment in the end. For instance, instead of using "Telegraphy, wireless," she found that the psychology of the public mind, so far as she could get at it, was in favor of "Wireless telegraphy;" people were more apt to look under "Wireless telegraphy." Instead of looking under the "Eastern question" magazine readers at least are apt to look under "Far East," that being the form under which we are used to looking for material on that subject. Then in regard to the forms of names, also Miss Mann of Pittsburgh tells me that their one rule in the catalog department in Pittsburgh is that things should be put under the best known form. I feel very strongly if we could get together in that way, the reference librarian and the cataloger, and discuss those forms of catalog usage which would mean most to the public whom we are trying to help, that it would be a great advantage to us. The two words "simplification" and "co-operation" would seem to me to sum up the situation.

Mr HANSON: May I ask Miss Freeman if she places "Eastern question" under "Far East" does she place the original Russian-Turkish embroilie under "Balkan question"?

Miss FREEMAN: Mr Hanson, I haven't thought that out in detail. I am just taking one of the headings which Miss Guthrie mentioned to me as we were talking over the matter of subject headings, as a simplified heading which she found for her purposes meant more to people than "Eastern question" would.

Mr HANSON: Yes. That is, the Japanese and Chinese relations to the Eastern question would come under "Far eastern question"?

Miss FREEMAN: Yes.

Mr HANSON: You would have nothing under "Eastern question" except a reference perhaps?

Miss FREEMAN: I should not say that

necessarily. I should think that if we have to use "Eastern question" and found the heading "Far East" more available for some of our material, we would have to use a cross reference there and say "see also the Far East." I am afraid the "see also" wouldn't mean much to people but I should think that would be a matter we would have to use if we were going to put a part of our material where it would be more readily useful to the public.

Mr HANSON: The example brought up by Miss Freeman illustrates very well the difference between the subject headings of a large scholarly library and the smaller library of a popular character.

The specialist who studies the Eastern question is sure to prefer an arrangement whereby he can find as much as possible of his material in one place. Accordingly, we arrange in the Library of Congress as follows:

1 Eastern question for all general works.

2 Eastern question (Balkan) for the relations, mainly of the Turks and Russians on the Balkan peninsula.

3 Eastern question (Central Asia) for the relations, mainly of the British and Russians in Afghanistan, Beloochistan, Persia, Thibet and the Indian frontiers.

4 Eastern question (Far East) for the books on China and Japan in their relations to the western nations and the relations of the latter to one another in the Far East.

I can readily see, however, that for a popular library, a separation of this literature under heading such as Far East, Balkan question, etc. may prove more serviceable.

Mr AUSTEN: May I ask Mr Hanson a question? One of the things that has come out is the unconscious, you might say, contrast between catalog headings and index headings. The word "index" heading has not been used but that is really the word that we would apply to the headings as they are used by the Wilson publishing company, and those of us who co-operate in "Poole's Index," and one of the

things that came over me again and again and again is whether it wasn't possible for us, even in our scholarly catalog, to use more index headings and less roundabout catalog headings. That must be an ever present consideration with Mr Hanson.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you think that when a subject heading ceases to be roundabout it becomes an index heading?

Mr AUSTEN: I should not necessarily. But the index heading is the short cut to what we often put in another form and it is not the form that the average mind approaches first. In other words, our readers, as you all know, will find their way through the indexes much more readily than through the catalog. Index headings are much easier for them to get than the catalog headings. That is common observation, I think, and it suggests if it is not due to the fact that the index headings are more direct and more in the way in which people approach those subjects.

Mr HANSON: I do not like to take the floor again, but Mr Austen asked me a direct question in regard to the distinction between the alphabetic-classed headings and the strict dictionary index headings. Now for some years I have noticed that in the very largest libraries there has been a tendency towards the alphabetic classed—I wouldn't say the classed but there has been a sort of meeting point between the dictionary catalog and the alphabetic catalog. The tendency has been to bring headings together by inversion, placing, for instance under the noun a qualifying adjective, thus bringing together quite a number of related headings. I know that the undergraduate in a college will naturally look towards the index heading—

Mr AUSTEN: The professor as well.

Mr HANSON: That has not been my experience, although I have had a great deal of work in the university libraries. I think if it is pointed out to the professor that the related subjects are brought together, that is the thing he wants. Time and again we have complaint that our classed catalog is not open to the public

yet except in certain sections. The specialist, the professor, the more he can get together of a particular subject the better satisfied he is. If we can do that by this inversion of headings and by reference I think it is proper enough. The Harvard catalog is arranged on that principle; the different subject catalogs which I examined abroad were arranged on that principle. I am sorry that the admirable subject index which Mr Fortescue has prepared for the British museum, while arranged under the alphabetic subject it does not refer to the class inclusive subject under which this heading is placed. For instance, I think he has "Free trade and protection" under "Tariff," but there is no reference, as I recall it, to "Protection." I remember long ago when I was a freshman and for the first time tried to use a college catalog, I wanted to find a grammar. Naturally I looked under "Grammar."

If a student is looking for a book under "Pronunciation of English language" he is going to look under "Pronunciation." That may be the best form in a popular library, but for a library that is intended for specialists I rather incline to the other. And I cannot say that if you put in a "see" reference and refer to another heading that the person is unable to refer to find the "see" reference. I remember as a freshman we had to dig into a catalog and find out for ourselves, and if there was one there who did not understand it, the other one said "You have got to go over to that "see" reference and find what you want," and gradually we learned to use the references very well.

Miss MANN: In Pittsburg we take care of the difficulties of specialists by making a special catalog for that class of readers. We have a dictionary catalog which is complete and also includes these books in the technology department, but we also make a classified card catalog of the technology department and the men who come to investigate the books in technology use the classified catalog more than they do the dictionary.

The CHAIRMAN: We will now hear the report of the nominating committee, the officers of the Section for the next year.

Mr RODEN: The nominating committee reports the following: for chairman of the Section, Miss Alice B. Kroeger, librarian of the Drexel Institute library, Philadelphia, Pa.; for secretary, Miss Laura Smith, chief cataloger of the Cincinnati public library.

The CHAIRMAN: You have heard the nominations. All in favor of these candidates will please say aye. Unanimously carried.

## SECOND SESSION

### Small Libraries session

The meeting was called to order Thursday, June 25, 1908, at 8.30 P. M. by the chairman, Agnes M. Van Valkenburgh.

The CHAIRMAN: When we find two great institutions working for the same end it always seems very desirable if possible to obtain cooperation between the two and with that in view we have asked Miss ALICE S. TYLER of the Iowa state library commission to speak to us tonight about what the commission will do for the small library in the line of the catalog.

### THE LIBRARY COMMISSION, THE SMALL LIBRARY AND THE CARD CATALOG

I take it that the topic assigned to me for discussion is simply another way of presenting for consideration the question of the value and relation of the card catalog to the very small library.

Possibly this discussion might well be closed before making a beginning, by saying that the *very* small library can do quite well without a catalog. But first we must understand what is meant by the very small library; and I will arbitrarily, for the purposes of this paper, state that a library of 2000 volumes and under is in my mind when the term "very small library" is used. This means one librarian, who is the many sided, many handed func-

tionary who attends to all the activities of the library and makes all the records, with the exception of such aid as is rendered by the library commission of the state.

Inasmuch, however, as we cannot dogmatize on topics such as this, which are many sided, the following points should be considered:

1 With free access to the shelves, does the public really use a card catalog in the small library, or is not the classification arrangement in such an open shelf library in a sense its own index?

2 With an intelligent librarian, what is the smallest collection of books that it would seem necessary to catalog in order to make it effective for use with the public?

3 If a catalog is made, how fully should the books be analyzed on the subject side?

4 How full should the entry be made as to author, title and imprint?

5 Who will use the catalog after it is made? Is it for librarian or public?

6 Relative to other lines of work, is a library commission justified in spending the time necessary to make a dictionary catalog for a small library?

7 How is the catalog to be kept up when new books are added if the librarian is unskilled, and is a library with a total annual income not exceeding \$1,000 likely to have a skilled librarian?

I am well aware that to propound a long series of questions is much easier than to answer them, but in this way I hope to suggest a train of thought and stimulate discussion, which after all is the real purpose of this paper.

In Miss Crawford's very able paper in the June number of "Public Libraries" on "Some essentials of cooperative cataloging," we find the following statement: "The public rarely learns how to use a book to its full effectiveness, and does not use a card catalog often enough to remember from one time to the next that 'dictionary' arrangement means from two to five alphabets for the same word, or to recall that the President's messages are entered under United States, instead of under Presidents; or that Newman comes after New

York. He has a reprehensible habit of reading newspapers and magazines, and somehow cannot understand why a library should take so much trouble to twist things about and to hide the everyday newspaper name under some outlandishly foreign or pedantic or technical word. He cannot understand why books should require a different lingo than life—his life."

The above in a concise manner suggests this thought—that the cataloger must be able in season and out of season, no matter what her personal tastes, or her scholarly attainments may be, to retain the mental attitude of the average user of a public library. In a large city library there is, because of the location in a center of population, much use made of the library by the scholar and investigator, and consequently the simplicity of the catalog may not be so necessary; but the small library that first of all must initiate the patrons into the mystery and use of even the simplest sort of card record, must touch the people's mentality at a point where a response may reasonably be expected.

After several years' observation of many small struggling libraries, and a personal acquaintance with scores of librarians of small libraries, from many of whom I have learned much of the spirit of intelligent and helpful service, I am inclined to give at least an opinion on some of the questions propounded above with the hope that you will disagree with some of them, at least to the point of discussing them. With free access to the books and the shelf arrangement by the decimal classification I am confident the small library can serve the people adequately and well, with an author catalog, a title list of fiction, and of course a shelflist on cards, if by some means the librarian is able to give the library an atmosphere of welcome and knows her books. It does not seem to me essential, with a library of say under 2,000 volumes, that a dictionary catalog be made, when there are so many other things much more vital that take every moment of the librarian's time. A

personal appearance with that number of books is possible, if the librarian has grown up with the collection and sees each volume added to the collection.

If, however, a card catalog is made, it would certainly seem evident that the first need would be by this means, to reveal the obscure chapters and parts of books which the classification and shelf arrangement has not brought out, and for that reason, I would say that the subject analytic would really be the most important sort of cataloging the small library could have. As to the fullness of entry on the catalog card, it is generally recognized that in the small library it is unnecessary to make search for the full name of author, that the title may wisely be abridged, and that the elaborate imprint information is entirely unnecessary, my own opinion being that the publisher and date might possibly be retained, and the number of volumes, if more than one.

Now, as to who will use the catalog after it is made for the small library? Will the public really use it, or will the person who seeks specific information either browse among the books or else go to the librarian? I am inclined to think for the majority of persons it will be one of these two things, and that seldom will they go from their own initiative to the card catalog. It seems to me, therefore, that the catalog for the small library is primarily for the librarian herself to quickly reveal the resources of the library in her work with the public, and it is for this reason that I make the plea for the analytic subject cataloging.

Now, as to the relation of a library com-

mission to this topic, would say that it becomes vital just at the point where the question is raised as to whether a commission is justified in spending the time necessary to make a dictionary catalog for the small library when the new fields are waiting for aid in making a beginning, and the new libraries are to be supplied with the fundamental records, i. e. accession, classification, shelflist, and loan system. The further question as to the commission's duty in keeping up this catalog from year to year as new books are added, is also a vital one, as the duties of the library commission grow. The Summer school is a partial solution of this question, as the unskilled librarian of the small library is expected to acquire through the Summer school, at least sufficient facility to work with the organizer and thus be able to do the necessary work afterward when new books arrive. Always and emphatically we must remind ourselves that no plan for records or catalog should be introduced into a small library that will be an impossibility for the local librarian to continue, or that will become a burden in the future.

Discrimination between the means and the end must enter into the discussion of this question to a large degree. The broad view which catalogers are taking of the scope of their work in recent years, makes it evident that the catalog is recognized as a means that must be effective and practical in order to ensure definite and helpful aid to the reader, and surely in the small library it is especially important that this means should be simple and flexible.

## CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS' SECTION

### FIRST SESSION

Tuesday morning, June 23. Miss Hannah C. Ellis in the chair.

Miss ANNIE CARROLL MOORE presented the first paper.

### LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP AS A CIVIC FORCE

Fifteen years ago the Minneapolis public library opened a children's room from which books were circulated. Previous to